



Historical Discourse.

A SERMON

RELATING TO THE

Garden St. and Washington Square Reformed Dutch Churches

OF NEW YORK,

BY

M. S. HUTTON, S. T. D.

NEW YORK.

1877.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONSISTORY OF
THE REFORMED PROTESTANT DUTCH CHURCH OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK.

December 7th, 1876.

Resolved: *That the REV. DR. HUTTON be requested, at his convenience, to prepare and deliver in one or more of our churches, a discourse respecting the history of his recent charge in Washington Square, going back to the first organization of the Garden St. Church as a separate organization.*

[EXTRACT FROM MINUTES.]

GEO. S. STITT,

Clerk.

New York, May 7th, 1877.

REV. DR. HUTTON:

My Dear Sir:—I am directed by our Consistory to request from you, for publication, a copy of your historical sermon on the old Garden Street Church and the Washington Square Church, recently delivered.

Respectfully Yours,

GEO. S. STITT,

Clerk.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.

ZECHARIAH, iv : 6.—“Not by might, nor by power
but by my spirit, saith the Lord.”

THE device of the corporate seal of the church on Washington Square is a stand, representing the golden candlestick of the Jewish Tabernacle. Instead, however, of the seven branches, it supports a bowl on the rim of which are seven lamps. On each side of the stand is a tree whose branches interlock, and overshadow the bowl. Underneath are the words selected as my text, “By my spirit, saith the Lord.”

No words can better describe this seal and show its import, than those of the inspired record. “I looked,” — says the prophet, — “and, behold, a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.” To the question, “what are these?” the answer is, — “this is the word of the Lord * * saying, ‘Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.’”

The primary and immediate design of the vision, was to induce the ancient church to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians. But, like many of the ancient prophecies, its grandest, if not its most important, fulfilment is found in the Christian church, and was intended to

point out the true source of its success and triumph. The silent and gentle influence of divine grace was symbolised by the two olive trees, which were so fruitful that, without any pressure of their fruit, the bowl should be supplied with the needed oil, and the lamps be thus kept burning brightly. Both in its primary and its more extended sense, therefore, it admits of a striking application to the success and history both of the Garden Street and the Washington Square Churches. This is the reason why I have selected these words as my text on this occasion. For as truly as in the history of the effort here referred to by Zechariah, so to the same divine source must be traced the success and usefulness of these two churches. To God be all the glory! It was "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

Much might be found in the earlier history of our denomination in New York, in illustration of the text. But, as the request in compliance with which this sermon was prepared, refers only to these two churches, I would merely remark that the first Governor of the City in 1626 brought with him a religious instructor and teacher, and that during the next sixty-seven years, two church edifices had been erected by the civil authorities on the lower end of the island. But in 1693 the population had so increased, that more church accommodation was desirable, and at that date Garden Street Church first appears. It was resolved by the people, to erect a building in what was then known as Garden Alley, — afterwards Garden Street, — and now called Exchange Place. This location was objected to by some, as being too far out of town. The church and cemetery occupied the centre of the block, on the north side of the way, between William and Broad Streets. The building was octagonal, with a

tower, or steeple, in the centre of the roof. In 1776 the edifice was enlarged and repaired.

In the mean time, however, the city had continued to grow rapidly, — as it has ever done, — and in 1729 another house of worship was erected, on the corner of Nassau and Cedar Streets, and called for the time the “New” Church. This is still standing, and has been known to the present generation as the Post-Office. On the 2nd of July, 1767, the corner-stone of a third church was laid, on the corner of Fulton and William Streets, and styled the “North” Dutch Church. In consequence of this, the name of the “New” Church was changed to the “Middle” Dutch Church, and the Garden Street Church received the title of the “South” Dutch Church, — a name which it still retains, although it has taken two great leaps: first to the corner of Church and Murray Streets, and then to the corner of Twenty-First Street and Fifth Avenue, where it still stands.

This growth of the city, and the erection of two other churches, naturally lessened the attendance on the ministrations at the South Church in Garden Street. It is said that the last sermon ever preached in it, was delivered to fourteen hearers. It was consequently closed for some time. But the ground upon which it stood had been consecrated to church purposes, and was considered too sacred to be finally given up to secular uses. It was also supposed, that if a more attractive building were erected, it would again be filled, and therefore the venerable fathers of the Consistory decided that a church must remain where a church had always been. Accordingly, in 1807 it was taken down and rebuilt. The new building was sixty-six feet long, and fifty feet wide, with a circular end. It remained, for a short time, one of the Colle-

giate churches, but the Consistory were much disappointed in the result. When the pews were offered for sale there were only sixty purchased, and it was soon perceived that the church was actually too far down town. Even those who were most strenuous to have it rebuilt, had their pews in the Middle and North Churches, and asked why they should go to the South Church, where they had the same ministers as in the others. Consequently the question began to be mooted, whether an independent church, with its own individual pastor, would not be more successful and profitable, than to continue under the Collegiate charge.

But the first actual record of this movement, is found in the minutes of January 2d, 1812. There it is stated that a petition, or memorial, subscribed by seventy-four persons, was presented and read, praying for a separation of the South Church from the other churches. The question was then put—“are there any terms, on which Consistory will consent to separate the South Church from the others?”

This was answered in the affirmative. Dr. WILSON, and Messrs. KIP and HEYER were appointed a committee, to meet Messrs. THOMAS STORM, HENRY I. WYCKOFF and ABRAHAM BRINCKERHOFF, on the part of the memorialists, to consider the subject. The two committees acted with great promptness, and, on the 24th of that same month, — the great Consistory assenting, — it was “*Resolved*: — that the Church of Garden Street and the grounds adjoining, with a Church-Bond for \$15,355, the amount of the late sale of pews, — be transferred to the new organization, conditioned on a lease of 999 years.” Application was immediately made to Classis for their assent, and on the 18th of February, 1812, the separation was confirmed by the Classis, and the

Rev. Dr. KUYPERS was appointed to ordain elders and deacons in the new organization.

The church was accordingly organized. But there was great diversity of opinion respecting the choice of a pastor, it being understood that they should not call any of the then Collegiate ministers. Unable to agree on any one, and finding it difficult to obtain supplies for the pulpit, the Consistory applied to the Rev. Dr. JAMES M. MATTHEWS, then an assistant of Dr. JOHN MASON in the theological seminary of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, and engaged him to preach for them once on each Lord's day, until they could select a pastor. "Neither of us," — remarks Dr. MATTHEWS, — "had then the remotest idea of my settlement among them as a pastor." But he who says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit," had the end in view.

Men of piety, intelligence and wealth were induced to favor the new effort. A strong attachment was soon formed between them and the preacher, and in July, 1813, Dr. MATTHEWS had consented to serve them, and was installed as pastor. Thus the enterprise was fairly launched.

In a semi-centennial discourse preached by Dr. MATTHEWS in 1857, he says, "When I was called to take charge of the church, there were but nineteen families to be considered as belonging to it; and at our first communion, the members who sat down at the Lord's table, with the elders and deacons, all told, amounted to seventeen in number. With such small beginnings, did we engage in the work of building up what had been for years a waste place in Zion." "The success," — he adds, — "was far beyond our deserts. Notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances of its location, the church was soon filled

with a strong congregation. Members attached themselves to it, having large means and large hearts, soon putting its temporal welfare beyond the reach of peradventure." "But the chief glory of the church," — he goes on to say, — "lay in its spiritual prosperity. If the members were few in the beginning, it was a spark of the right fire that dwelt within them; — it was a coal from the altar above."

This testimony I am able to corroborate. It is at this point that my personal knowledge of the church commences. Although I was a lad of only ten years of age, I recall with great vividness the deep interest, pride and love, with which we were wont to regard the church and its loved and popular pastor. In our estimation there was no superior in the pulpit, or in the parlor, to Dr. MATTHEWS. And the men who were grouped around him commanded our warmest love.— They were truly helpers in the good cause. Two of the elders aided him every week in catechising. Every Saturday evening there was held what was called the "Elders' Prayer-Meeting." It was a kind of bible-class, — very pleasant and very profitable. It was at one of these meetings that I offered my first public prayer; and I am not certain that the influence of these meetings had not something to do in leading me into the Gospel ministry; they certainly had much to do in cultivating the zeal, piety and activity of the church. Dr. MATTHEWS possessed large views of Christian union and enterprise, and was in the foremost rank as an advocate of the religious efforts, which at this time were awakened in the churches.

And his influence was felt, and responded to by his attached people. The most perfect harmony and union pervaded the whole church, and the continued presence and blessing of the Holy Spirit, was enjoyed

to the very last. This was seen in the large contributions to benevolent purposes, in the steady ingathering of the young into the church, and in the unity of the people, which was so marked that it might have been said of them as of old, "Behold, how these brethren love one another!" The church shared largely in the general revival of religion, which spread through many of the churches of our city in 1831, and during that happy season, "aged members of the congregation," — says Dr. MATTHEWS in the sermon already alluded to, — "who had reached their three score and even three score and ten, were made subjects of the gracious work. But the harvest was chiefly among the young; and so profusely was the spirit poured out, that, in several instances, every son and daughter in whole households, came forward, and publicly professed the name of the Saviour." At one single communion there was an addition to the church of eighty persons; and at the communion following, forty were added.

It was only two years after this great ingathering that my connection with the church, as an associate pastor, commenced. In 1834, Dr. MATTHEWS having become the chancellor of the University of New York, — into the establishment of which institution, and the erection of its noble building, he had thrown himself with all his energy, and with his whole soul, — it became imperative that he should have an assistant, if he retained the pastorate of the church. I was accordingly called to this office. It was an honor unsought, and most unexpected, by me. To my mind, it was the highest, the noblest, the most desirable position which the great head of the church could bestow upon me. I had been asking him to direct my steps, and without a movement of my own in that direction, I received, a few days after, a unanimous call to the church

of my father, and of my boyish attachment. It was with devout sentiments of wonder and gratitude and love, that I found myself connected as Christ's minister, with my most loved and honored pastor, and saw myself surrounded and sustained by the venerable elders, to some of whom I had, in my early days, recited the Heidelberg catechism. You will pardon me for thus speaking of myself.

But a storm of desolating fury from a clear heaven broke upon us, sweeping away in a single night our church-building with all its hallowed associations. I allude to the great fire of 1835. About nine o'clock in the evening of the sixteenth day of December, with the thermometer three degrees below zero, we were startled by the ringing of the bells, and the cry of fire. The alarm continuing to sound so long, and the light in the heavens increasing, I was induced to go out to witness the scene. I returned after midnight with a solemn and saddened heart, — the church in ashes!

I, with the chief engineer of the Fire Department, had climbed into the steeple of the church, where for some two hours we watched the radiant fire-sheet rapidly advancing, even against the wind, to enclose the church in its terrible folds. So intense was my excitement, that I was unconscious of the cold, and was only aroused to it by the remark of the engineer, "We had better descend; the church is already on fire." Dr. Matthews and myself then took our stand on the steps of a house on the opposite side of the street, unable to draw ourselves away from the loved building. We stood silent, with our eyes fixed upon the pulpit. At last he exclaimed, "there goes the pulpit!" We turned and left the scene.

The incident of the pastors looking at the burning

pulpit in that hour, and then turning sadly away, reminds me of two other incidents of similar character. Our organist entered the building when almost all others had deserted it, and the organ ceased not to utter its wail, until the fire commenced dropping from the ceiling; and the sexton, until the fire cut off the rope, ceased not to ring with a wild ring, the bell, which sounded as if struggling in its last agony; but the agony was in our hearts. Nothing was left of the scene of our labors and enjoyment, but the blackened and crumbling walls.*

This calamity, which rendered our church, and a large district of our city, an utter ruin, at once brought up the important question,—where ought the church to be rebuilt? No one for a single moment thought of rebuilding it on that spot, sacred as we felt it to be. Before the fire, it had become surrounded by lofty store-houses, and very few dwelling houses were to be found south of Wall St. and east of Broad St. Although we held the property, as has been noticed, by a lease for 999 years, yet it was a *lease* not a deed. We, of course, could not dispose of the ground without the consent of the Collegiate Church. This con-

* It is pleasant, however, to be able to state that there remains one touching and solitary memorial of this interesting church edifice. When this sermon was delivered, in the 29th and 48th St. Churches, on the table in front of the pulpit, stood a glass shade, covering a brass ball. In reference to this ball was received the following note from a venerable elder of the Collegiate Church.

“This ball was picked up by Mr. Sylvanus S. Ward in Garden St., immediately after the fall of the steeple, so hot that it was handled with difficulty. He had the following words engraved on it: ‘The upper ball, from the steeple of the Garden St. Church, burnt in the great conflagration at New York, on the 16th and 17th of December, 1835, in which were destroyed 650 buildings, and \$20,000,000 of property.’

‘A few years after, it was presented to me, and I had it mounted as at present. JAMES ANDERSON, M. D.’”

It has fallen into good hands. For if there is a true lover of the Dutch Church, it is our esteemed and honored Elder, Dr. James Anderson.

sent, after several plans and propositions had been rejected, was at last obtained on condition of our paying into their treasury \$62,000—a measure, which we, at the time, thought was very hard, but which, as I look back now, I have no doubt actually saved from financial ruin both the enterprises which resulted from the fire,—God, by his spirit, over-ruling and guiding the whole matter.

The property being thus placed in our hands, it was found that we were not of one mind on the question of where the church should be rebuilt. This diversity of opinion eventually resulted in our dividing into two bands, both of which have been blessed of God. The old Garden Street Church built, temporarily, on the corner of Church and Murray Streets, whence it removed to Fifth Avenue and Twenty-First Street, and is still flourishing as the garden of the Lord, under the care of Dr. E. P. Rogers, and still rejoicing in her old title—"The South Dutch Church." Her loved title will, ere long, become no misnomer. She is already almost the furthest south of the Reformed churches in the city.

The other band deemed it wiser to go at once to the upper part of the city. They selected a location on Washington Square, and requested the pastors—who had been allowed to choose to which of the bands they would continue attached, and who preferred the up-town movement,—to commence divine services in the small chapel of the University. Although the pastors still retained their connections with the South Dutch Church, who, at this time, were regularly worshipping in the chapel of the brick Presbyterian Church, on the east side of the City Hall Park, and at the junction of Park Row and Nassau Street, yet, in accordance with the above request, they commenced an evening service

in the small chapel of the University, in February, 1837. On the 30th of April, in that year, they organized the church on Washington Square, by the installation of THOMAS BOYD, M. D., and O. HOLMES as elders, and HENRY ROOSEVELT and EDWARD L. MATTHEWS as deacons, and received into the communion of the church forty-nine members. It was not, however, until the 16th of November, 1837, that the connection of the pastors with the South Church ceased, and they became the regular pastors of the new church.

During the following three years, while worshipping in the chapel of the University, the membership had increased from forty-nine to one hundred and fifty-nine and the crowded state of the chapel made us anxious to obtain a larger place of worship. It was impossible for us to increase in the situation we then occupied. There were, however, difficulties in our way. The ground on the corner of Washington Square and Washington Place had been purchased; but there were on it two or three tenements, which had been leased to persons who felt that the church was in their power, and therefore demanded large sums to vacate the ground. One evening the Consistory had met in the council-room of the University, which overlooked the ground selected for the church, and the question was agitated, whether we had not better pay all that was demanded, rather than delay for an hour the erection of the building. Before a conclusion was reached, there was a cry of "fire," and MR. ROOSEVELT raised the window to ascertain whence the alarm proceeded. As he did so, he turned and said to us, "Brethren! God has decided the question for us." The tenements were in flames.

Arrangements to build were at once made, and we were allowed to dedicate our new house in September,

1840. The ground on which it was erected, cost \$14,000, and the contract cost of the building was \$67,000.

When it is considered that the church had no ready money, her receipts from the rental of the chapel only paying the rent of that building, it will be at once seen that we entered our new church overwhelmed with debt, and surrounded with difficulties. We entered, in fact, with but one earthly hope for our extrication; and that was the sale of a sufficient number of pews, to meet our most pressing liabilities. In this hope we were disappointed; and then there commenced a struggle for existence, which none save those who passed through it can conceive. Having had no income during the three preceding years, save what merely sufficed to pay the rent of the chapel, and all that we could raise on the property in Exchange Place being needed to erect stores thereon, and to defray the necessary yearly expenses of the church while the edifice was being built, we could maintain the struggle for two years only. On the 16th of April, 1842, at a joint meeting of the Consistory and a committee of the congregation, it was unanimously resolved,—“that the Consistory be advised to take as early measures for the sale of the church, and of the entire property, as may be consistent with the interests of all concerned.”

In accordance with this resolution, efforts were made to dispose of the church edifice, but without avail. In the interim, suits had been commenced on some of our unpaid church bonds, and on the evening of May 30th, 1842, it was decided to make an assignment of the whole property, for the benefit of the creditors. This was the only honorable course, and it was necessary to prevent a judgment which

would have been an injury to other bond-holders. It was accordingly done, and, in July, the pastors were requested to unite in an application to Classis for a dissolution of the pastoral tie. I at once complied with the request, and my relation with the loved Church was sundered. In November following, the consent of the senior pastor having been obtained, his connection with the Church ceased also. In the mean time the church property was put up at auction, and the stores in Exchange Place were sold. But the sale of the church edifice was postponed, partly to keep it out of the hands of the Roman Catholics,—who were said to be ready to buy it,—and partly from the hope that the church might yet be saved to the denomination, through the aid of the Collegiate Church, hitherto denied. The sum realized from the sale of the stores, was only \$5000 over the amount of the mortgages which covered them, thus giving but slight relief, as the amount due on the property, was a debt of \$35,000, and a mortgage of \$44,000—making in all \$79,000.

It will be remembered that the property was placed in the hands of assignees in the month of May. In September following, certain individual members of the congregation hired the church of the assignees, and applied to me, promising that if I would preach for them, they would make another effort to save the church. I felt bound to comply with their wishes and further the effort, and in February 1843, the aid hoped for from the Collegiate Church was given. It will be recollected that the debt, for which the church was immediately responsible, was \$35,000. The Collegiate Consistory promised to give us their bonds for one-half of this sum,—\$17,500—on condition of our raising the other half. This was done, and the church saved ;

and on the 14th of April, 1843, I was, for the third time, installed as a pastor over my beloved people, dearer to me than ever, on account of the troubles which we had borne together.

From that hour a bright heaven was over us, and a rich blessing upon us. Our church more than filled ; there was a list, at one time, of eighty applicants for pews, waiting for their turn. The social position of the people was such as was surpassed by no church in the city, and the preached word was unceasingly accompanied by the Holy Spirit. The Sunday-School was always a flourishing part of the organization, and became, under the superintendence of MR. RALPH WELLS, a model school ; while the church, for its contributions to the American Sunday-School Union, was, for some years, called, "The Banner Church."

While thus on the top of the wave, it was determined to make an effort to reduce the mortgage of \$44,000, still remaining, it will be remembered, upon the ground. It resulted in reducing the debt to \$23,000, which sum, it was supposed, we could easily carry. But in 1857, the rapid emigration of the wealthy families among us, to the upper portion of our ever growing city, made it evident that it became us to make another effort to remove the entire debt. The pews on the ground-floor of the church, were still all filled and in demand. But a large portion of the wealth which had been among us, had passed on to the more fashionable parts of the city, and it was felt that some external aid would be necessary. In these circumstances, recalling the fact that we had paid into the Collegiate Treasury \$31,000, and that the Consistory had kindly put us on our feet, by a former grant in our necessity, we felt that we must begin by asking their further aid. An application was therefore made

at their meeting in June 1857. Help from on High was sought; we knew that it was "not by might, nor by power," but by the spirit of God alone, that we could succeed. All was left in his hands.

Early the next morning, I received from my now sainted friend and brother, Dr. KNOX, a note which ran thus :—

"Our Consistory, last evening, by a unanimous vote, suspended the operation of their rule, in reference to your application, and then, by a like vote, appropriated to your use \$10,000, payable when certified that, with this amount, your indebtedness shall be extinguished.

"Under all existing circumstances, no more unequivocal, or earnest expression of kind sympathy with your concerns, could have been given. It has afforded me pleasure to promote this result, and is now a pleasure to communicate it.

"Yours truly,

"JOHN KNOX."

Yes,—DR. KNOX was a true friend.

One year from this time, on the second Sabbath of June, 1858, we sat down at the table of the Lord, with thirty-nine new members, thirty-three of them gathered from the world,—two of that number subsequently became successful and popular preachers of the Gospel, —and, on the following Monday the mortgage was paid off, and the church on Washington Square was entirely free from debt. Do you wonder that grateful hearts exclaimed, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord"?

But the wonderful growth and prosperity of our city were really against us. In a few years it became evident that we had ceased to be in the upper and growing part of the city, and had become again a down-town church. The tide of emigration out

of us was fearful, and affords a striking illustration of the changes ever going on in our busy population. Of the two hundred and five families who occupied our pews in 1858, there were only twenty-one who had been with us ten years before. This depletion and change increased steadily, and was gradually unsupplied by new comers. In 1861 it was proposed to start a new enterprise in the upper portion of the city, in connection with the Church on the Square; but the audience was still so large in the latter edifice, that the plan was dropped as not being necessary. The lapse of another ten years clearly showed that a mistake had been made, and that now the Church on the Square had become too feeble to move; especially as it was found on investigation, that it was impossible to obtain suitable grounds in the upper portion of the city, for less than one hundred and fifty, or two hundred thousand dollars. It was also found that, if the church were sold for any other purpose than a church of our denomination, the Collegiate Church had in virtue of their advances to us, a legitimate claim on the property for about \$85,000. It was therefore decided that the wise, and indeed the only right course was, to place the entire property in the hands of the Collegiate Consistory, subject only to a condition in favor of its pastor. This was done in 1876, and the church and grounds passed into the possession of the Greene St. Methodist Church, for the sum of \$80,000;—and her members are passing into other communions.

Her life has been continued for thirty-eight years. During that period she has received within her pale, and cheered upon their way to the Church on High, one thousand two hundred and sixteen souls. I have no record of her contributions to Church purposes previous to 1852, but since that period, they have

amounted to more than \$245,000, of which \$90,000 has been for benevolent purposes. She has sent forth nine young men into the Gospel ministry. She has gathered from the world steadily, every year, an average of eighteen or twenty souls. Scarcely a communion season through her whole existence has passed in which some sat not down for the first time at the Table of the Lord. This will surely be acknowledged to have been "not by might, nor by power, but by the spirit" of the Lord. I am, indeed, most conscious of my own unworthiness as her pastor,—know of many a shortcoming; but, as I look back over her history, recall the love which ever surrounded me, the prayers which were offered for me, the harmony which was never disturbed for a single hour, it is a blessed memory for which I can only say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and let all that is within me bless his holy name." No minister of Jesus has greater reason for thankfulness.

I have occupied so much more than the time usually given to a sermon, that I cannot pause upon the lessons of wisdom which this history affords. I would only notice.

First,—THE DEBT OF GRATITUDE WHICH THIS CITY OWES TO THE REFORMED CHURCH.

She brought here, and laid in the very foundations of the city, those religious principles on which the welfare of a community so much depends;—the old Bible principles, which are often called "Calvinistic,"—(although a better name would be PAULINE)—and whose fruits are always, liberty, morality, duty towards God and man, happiness in this world and the world to come. She planted the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the school-house here on this island, before the pilgrim fathers came to their aid,—planted them

within the fort, and, as the population increased, forestalled its necessity. At this hour, the growth of the city may be marked by *her* church edifices. She built Garden Street Church when the people said, "it is too far up-town." Then she built the Middle Church as the city grew,—then the North Church—then the Church on Lafayette Place, the people still saying, "it is too far up-town." Then came the Twenty-ninth Street Church as the people grew, and lately, the Forty-eighth Street Church,—marks and monuments of the growth of the city, each church an improvement in architectural beauty, and in advance of the population. She stands to-day along the line of the city's growth, holding forth the truths taught in the fort on the Battery. Many of her customs are still the pride and glory of the city. The chains which she once planted across the thoroughfares, to prevent the violation of the Sabbath and the disturbance of divine worship, are, morally, still across our streets, and manifested to-day in the habits of the community. Yes;—it may not be recognized by the present dwellers in our city, but it is a fact, that New York, in its observance of the Sabbath, in its public-school system, and in its general morality, is much indebted to the right beginning, and the sturdy devotion to religious principle, of our Holland forefathers.

Second,—THE DEBT OF GRATITUDE WHICH THE CHURCH OWES TO GOD FOR HIS CONTINUED AND UNIFORM BLESSING.

Her very existence, amid the multiplied difficulties which have ever attended her progress, is a subject for devout gratitude. The possession of the island by the English, and the establishment of a Court Church backed by the authority of England,—the Holland language in a population increasing so rapidly, and speaking another tongue,—all the difficulties and anti-religious

influences connected with an unceasing tide of immigration, had to be encountered and overcome. And when we estimate these aright, and see where the Church stands to-day, and her influence, from the daily Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting all along the city to Forty-Eighth Street Church, must she not, ought she not say in humble and adoring gratitude, "Not by might, nor by power, but by Thy spirit, oh, Lord, hath it been done"? To him be the glory!

One further reflection and lesson. How SHOULD THIS REFORMED CHURCH OF OURS BE LOVED AND CHERISHED BY ALL WHO HAVE THE HAPPINESS AND THE HONOR OF BEING CONNECTED WITH HER, IN THIS CITY.

It is "THE Church of New York,"—the first planted here, and whose influence for good has been surpassed by no other. It has been said that she is decreasing,—dying out! In some aspects this may be true. For her children have not always been true to her, and the names which now adorn, and constitute the strength and glory of many of the denominations around us, are the names of our Holland ancestors.

It has also been said that, soon there will be no other Reformed Church in our city, but the Collegiate churches. It may be so. But the Collegiate Church is the MOTHER-CHURCH. Offshoots have sprung up and done their work, and have died, as has done the church on Washington Square. But has the Collegiate Church with her line running through the city, decreased? The mass of her members is not indeed "Dutch," for the name has necessarily lost its significance in our day. But her history, as connected with this city, cannot die. It should be regarded as an honor to be connected with her, by every one who glories in being a New Yorker.

One thought more. It has sometimes been said that it is a question whether it be a real advantage to have a church endowed. I would reply, in view of the history of the Collegiate Church, by the simple question,—what legacy, in any age, has done more good to this city and to the cause of Christ, than that gift of our Dutch ancestors? Their works have followed them. It has been quite common for many to find fault with the manner in which these funds have been used. I do not say that there have been no mistakes made. But the results of that management show both causes of thankfulness to God, and for encouragement. Look at the history before us. See what has been done by the gift to the Garden Street Church only sixty-five years ago! It planted two of the most successful and useful churches in our city,—churches which have won thousands from the world, and united them to Christ,—which have given thousands of dollars to the cause of the Master,—one of whom as she dies, returns into her treasury \$80,000, and the other, under her historic name “The South Dutch Church,” still flings to the air the banner of the cross, and is moving on with firm and steady step in her glorious march. Look back, also, and see the rude building in the fort on the battery, and then cast your eye along the line of fortifications she has planted along the line of the growing city, up to Forty-eighth Street, from each of which the Gospel cannon are still thundering the joyful proclamations of redemption, and tell me,—has she not “held the fort” in which the Master planted her? Call you THIS dying out? Must we not say, with adoring and humble gratitude, “Not by might, nor by power, but by thy spirit, O Lord”? Should we not thank God, and take courage?

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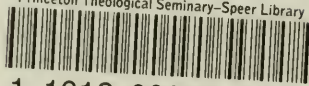
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